THE LOCAL SCHOOL TEAM:

GOALS, ROLES AND FUNCTIONS

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THE LOCAL SCHOOL TEAM: GOALS, ROLES AND FUNCTIONS

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Executive Summary

The Study

This study of the functioning of the Local School Team in elementary and secondary schools in the Toronto Board of Education is based on responses from 332 staff members in 43 elementary and 11 secondary schools, or 81% of the elementary and 69% of the secondary schools contacted. (The contacted schools were a representative 50% sample of all schools.)

Respondents represented the various disciplines/roles found on LSTs: principals/vice-principals, teachers, psychoeducational consultants, social workers, guidance counsellors, and others, as well as teachers who were not team members.

Some Findings

Regarding team membership and organization

1. Elementary teams are typically chaired by a principal or vice-principal.
2. Most teams meet once every one or two weeks. Elementary teams are more likely than secondary teams to meet frequently. More frequent meetings are associated with higher levels of member satisfaction.
3. Typically, three quarters of meetings are devoted to discussing individual students.
4. Chairpersons usually take responsibility for coordinating the implementation of recommendations made at team meetings.

Regarding students referred to teams

1. Most referred students were discussed on more than one occasion, but were not referred to either local or Area IPRC.
2. Referred students were distinguished, in the main, by academic performance deficits, especially in the area of written language. In addition, they were often described as not being highly motivated, and as lacking good study habits and skills.

3. The referred population was generally not seen as highly deficient in social skills, or as being typified by emotional problems or psycho-social stressors.

Regarding team functioning

1. There was considerable consensus about what the teams' goals are, and that the teams usually achieve their goals.

2. Most respondents see team members as actively and collaboratively engaged in decision-making, including in the setting of goals. Classroom teachers,who are usually not team members, felt somewhat less engaged as active participants in the meetings they attend (usually only when they have made a referral).

3. Team members are seen to bring different skills to the task, depending on their professional background. Classroom teachers, however, are seen as providers of information about the individual referred student, rather than as sharers of expertise regarding strategies and interventions.

4. The large majority of team members felt teams were effective in benefitting students, and that follow-up plans were implemented. The rate of agreement, while still high, was significantly lower among classroom teachers and psychoeducatinal consultants.

5. Areas for improvement cited by respondents include:

    a. more focus on intervention strategies, instead of problems;
    b. more focus on classroom and school-wide prevention strategies;
    c. greater teacher involvement in decision-making; and
    d. more time spent on follow-up.

    These are seen as some key areas in which professional development is needed.

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Chapter 1

THE LOCAL SCHOOL TEAM: GOALS, ROLES AND FUNCTIONS

1.1 Introduction

Multidisciplinary teams in school boards have existed for over two decades (Yau, 1988). They have assumed different names, related to the teams' objectives and the organizational characteristics of the schools and policies which guide them. Regardless of their specific objectives, however, such teams are designed to support educators in providing appropriate interventions for students in need of assistance (Schram, Semmel, 1984; Hayek, 1987).

School teams have gone through an evolutionary process and have in many instances shifted from a focus on the assessment of students' deficits to the more encompassing role of "problem-solving teams", "teacher assistance teams" or "pre-referral intervention teams". These problem-solving teams have become popular vehicles for service delivery and are currently operating in some states in the U.S.A. and several provinces in Canada (Chalfant and Pysh, 1984).

The enactment of U.S. Public Law 94-142 (1975) has had an impact on the role of school teams in the United States. This law required that multidisciplinary teams be established in order to provide for the assessment and education of handicapped children with the public school system. Consequently, in the United States, school teams are often known as "Assessment Teams", or "Planning and Placement Teams" (Yoshida, 1980; 1983). This reflects the ways in which they have been utilized in determining pupil eligibility for Special Education, and to a much lesser extent, to determine a pupil's individualized education program (Maher and Yoshida, 1985).

In Ontario, the enactment of Bill 82 required that all school Boards provide specialized services for the education of exceptional students. It established Identification, Placement and Review Committees to identify and monitor the needs of

students, but did not require the multidisciplinary assessment of student needs. In many schools, multidisciplinary teams were established as an efficient and cost effective way for coordinating services. However, not being mandated by legislation, they were free to adopt a wide variety of roles.

Advocates of a multidisciplinary approach of service to service delivery support its use for the following reasons (Abelson and Woodman, 1983; Hendrickson, Ross, Mercer and Walker, 1988; Wiener, Hofstra and Davidson, 1987; Hardy, Stennett and Posno, 1980.):

- a group offers a greater number of possible approaches to presenting problems;
- group problem-solving increases decision-making effectiveness and promotes commitment to outcomes;
- participation tends to increase acceptance of recommendations made;
- a multidisciplinary exchange leads to professional growth experience;
- school teams can monitor the impact of modified programs and share follow-up information about students discussed;
- peer support heightens staff morale and has the potential for creating a more positive climate for working with needy students;
- school teams are cost-effective since they coordinate efforts of educators and support staff and encourage sharing of expertise and resources;
- school teams provide appropriate referrals for special education services by first focusing on curriculum modifications and instructional alternatives in regular classrooms.

1.2 Types of Services

The consultative problem-solving process which teams develop is often described in the literature as including three phases:

Phase 1: Analysis of identified problem(s) - School teams provide an avenue for assessing students' problems by eliciting information from multiple data sources, including review of school records, observational data and work samples. During team meetings, teachers and support staff clarify the needs of individuals or groups of students. Instead of debating the causes of difficulties, questions are often discussed in order to form hypotheses about the students in their current learning environment (Cole and Siegel, 1990).

Phase 2: Development of plans for intervention - During this phase team members explore and evaluate possible intervention strategies and choose among alternatives. They generate short and long term action plans for school and/or community based support. Once recommendations have been made, team members assume responsibility for different facets of program implementation (Yau, 1988).

Phase 3: Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of interventions - The implementation of the team's recommendations is monitored during follow-up meetings as agreed upon. This phase provides the team with opportunities to receive feedback about school or community-based services and to evaluate their effectiveness. Additional recommendations or adjustments can be made on an as-needed basis (Hayek, 1987).

1.3 Factors Which Enhance or Inhibit the Success of School Teams

A number of writers have discussed factors which are considered to either enhance or inhibit the functioning of school teams. These include the following:

1. Clear Goals and Roles:

Once an education system has established a school team model, the goals and roles of its members have to be clearly defined for all professionals in the system.

Problem-solving teams, for example, have a broader mandate than Assessment and Placement teams. If these two models are confused in the minds of participants, some staff are less likely to feel supported by their team. For example, they might present cases with a special education recommendation in mind, while team members focus on the development of individualized programs in regular classrooms. Staff need to become appraised of the rationale for a particular service model in order to

develop a sense of ownership and to become committed to the notion that it provides an avenue for effective educational services (Ponti, Zins and Graden, 1988).

2. Principal's Support:

The development of multidisciplinary teams in school boards have placed principals in a change agent role. Administrative support is a crucial factor for successful team practices. In schools where principals or their designates have difficulty functioning in such a role, team meetings tend to be held infrequently, clarification of goals is not encouraged, shared responsibility around decision-making is often not promoted and implementation procedures tend to be weak.

Principals who are more receptive to change foster the development of collaborative teams and see them as a vehicle for achieving important educational goals. In addition to educational leadership, principals can offer administrative support, such as the provision of inservice training, organizational structure and release time for teachers. This kind of supportive atmosphere results in a large number of consulting relationships evolving naturally and voluntarily among the school staff, and can have positive implications for many joint programs in the school (Siegel and Cole, 1990 (a); Hayek, 1987).

3. Regular and Efficient Meetings:

When meetings are scheduled on a weekly or biweekly basis, the team is more likely to tap a broad range of services and reflect on the goals and agendas it sets for itself. Conversely, when meetings are held infrequently, teams tend to deal with urgent matters or crisis intervention. In such circumstances members have little time to evaluate group processes or to clarify issues of concern. In addition, the amount of time allotted for discussion of individual or groups of students has an impact on the formulation of questions and recommendations made. Teachers who present cases to the team are likely to become more involved in the decision-making process if they know that their class is supervised and the discussion is not rushed. Communication regarding team meetings and planning for them plays an important role in their success. The more advanced preparation time members have, the more productive and efficient the meetings are likely to become.

Teams which have developed a clear and stable meeting format tend to use time effectively and deal with the administrative and organizational details more efficiently.

School staff should have input into the format and process of team building in order to achieve consensual plans and objectives (Butler, 1984; Yau, 1988).

4. Team Membership:

Team membership varies according to the objectives it is trying to achieve. Some teams are comprised of educators and mental health professionals as core participants, while other models include educators and use consultants as invited members when their input is needed. Some models involve parents in team meetings in order to strengthen the partnership between home and school (Butler, 1984). Regardless of the team's composition or size, when the goal of the team is consultative problem solving, the referring teacher should be a key participant who has input into all phases of the process.

One of the major pitfalls occurs in teams which do not include regular classroom teachers as active participants. Research has shown that satisfaction with the team and its recommendations are correlated with participation in decision making. Often, regular teachers perceive themselves as low in participation and low in satisfaction with the team process (Yoshida, Fenton, Maxwell and Kaufman, 1977; Ysseldyke, Algozzine and Allen, 1981; Mercer, Peterson and Ross, 1988). Effective team leaders act as democratic facilitators who help clarify objectives and ensure equal participation and cross-disciplinary exchange in the consultation process.

5. A Team Approach:

Although team work conceptually implies positive and productive efforts and outcomes, it is also challenging in that it requires an expanded role and the development of new skills for all involved. A team approach and the changes it has brought to schools also imply new interpersonal processes and interdisciplinary trust, as well as the re-evaluation of one's role and that of other members of the team (Siegel and Cole, 1990 (a); Wiener and Davidson, 1990).

Traditionally discussions which include educators, psychologists and social workers usually centre around individual children whose learning or social needs are not being met in the regular classroom. Solutions to these problems tend to emphasize modifications such as the provision of special education and/or the involvement of community services. School teams with a broader mandate depart from such a traditional approach and require staff training. Lack of proper in-service training is likely

to lead to ineffective team operations, resistance to change and poor utilization of resources (Hayek, 1987). School teams which aim to develop a collaborative consultation model of service are likely to function more effectively when their members have focussed their professional development on the acquisition of skills including: collaborative problem-solving, prevention strategies, communication, curriculum based assessment and formative evaluation methods (Butler, 1984; Siegel and Cole, 1990 (b)).

1.4 Evaluation Studies

Since school teams are in their formative stage of development, there is a real need for more empirical investigation into the organization and utilization of teams (Maher and Hawryluk, 1983; Abelson and Woodman, 1983; Billups, 1987). Evaluations that exist raise important issues concerning cost-effectiveness; staff development as tied to team functions; and diagnosis as related to intervention (Pfeiffer, 1980; Mercer, Peterson and Ross, 1988).

A literature review on Problem-Solving Teams indicates that the most significant outcome of this model is the reduction of referrals to special educational programs (Yau, 1988). In a San Diego survey, Butler (1984) documented that in schools where Student Study Teams were in operation, there was nearly a 50% reduction in referrals to special education. Moreover, teachers who took part in the study indicated satisfaction with the assistance they received from their team.

In a more recent study on the effectiveness of a Pre-referral Intervention model, Ponti, Zins and Graden (1988) found that the majority of teachers demonstrated changes in their conceptions of children's problems and that they implemented strategies developed during consultation. Ponti and her colleagues concluded that the model became an avenue for the provision of broader and more frequent consultative services while psychological assessments had been reduced by over 40%.

Few comprehensive studies about the process of team functioning have been conducted to date; these provide inconclusive evidence about team efficiency (Pfeiffer, 1980; 1981; Kaiser and Woodman, 1985). Although the concept of multidisciplinary team decision-making holds a degree of face validity, empirical investigations indicate that, to date, this approach has not been as facilitative as it could potentially become (Kaiser and Woodman, 1985, Maher, 1983). Some criticisms of the use of school based

teams include issues related to the role ambiguity and confusion concerning responsibility for decisions (Wallace, 1976; Pfeiffer and Hefferman, 1984; Bardon, 1983).

A study reported by Pfeiffer (1981) explored team members' perceptions of the problems facing school teams. Findings indicated that members felt a need to become more involved in implementation and follow-through intervention activities, rather than spend most of the team's meeting time on labeling children. Study implications are that teams need to expand their goals and roles by adopting a broad-based assessment-intervention-follow-up system which emphasizes the evaluation of outcomes and the development of educational programs.

1.5 The Toronto Board School Teams - A Focus on Prevention

At the Toronto Board, a problem-solving orientation was formalized for school teams in 1986 when it was suggested that "most of the team's efforts would be directed at providing staff with individual strategies to assist them in their efforts to modify the students' program in the classroom" (Toronto Board of Education, 1986). Over the past few years Local School Teams (LST) have been focusing on needs identification and service delivery to students, families and schools. Teams are headed by the school principal or designate and are comprised of regular and special education teachers, psychoeducational consultants, social workers, guidance counsellors, school nurses and other support personnel.

The Local School Team has been highlighted during the recent Student Support Services Review, since it provides ongoing needs assessment information to the local education office about patterns of needs and effectiveness of services to the school community. In discussing the roles of psychoeducational consultants and social workers in the schools, the review re-emphasized the LST as "the delivery arm of the system" and stressed the importance of prevention programs (Toronto Board of Education, 1989). Thus, in contrast to assessment and placement team models which have a unidimensional focus, the LST reflects a mission which advocates the enhancement of the learning process for all students and has the potential for the provision of multidimensional services.

Caplan (1970) distinguished between three prevention approaches which, taken together, provide a useful framework for thinking about the work of school teams. Tertiary prevention programs are oriented toward students who are in crisis; for them, the difficulties experienced are severe enough as to significantly interfere with their educational progress and school adjustment. Secondary prevention programs are directed toward students who are "at risk". Their difficulties have not yet led to a crisis, but they do require some specialized intervention if their progress is to continue. Primary prevention programs are programs intended to maximize the educational progress and personal development of all students; if they are successful, such programs presumably reduce the need for secondary and tertiary services.

Parsons and Meyer (1984) have provided another way of looking at the work of school teams - one which emphasizes its role as a consultative team. These writers suggest that consultative services can be directed towards various targets. Consultants can provide direct services to the student and family and indirect or mediated service where someone else (often the classroom teacher) actually implements the intervention. Consultation can also be directed towards teachers themselves, for the purpose of providing them with information and helping them learn new skills. Finally, consultation can operate at the school building level. In this case, new programs or procedures can be devised or existing ones altered.

Based on the complementary work of Caplan and of Parsons and Myers, Cole and Siegel (1990 b) developed a model which combines prevention and consultation services. This model emphasizes that the school team should be prepared to provide the most appropriate service given the problem to be addressed.

The Student Assessment Teams discussed earlier focus their energies primarily on services for students in crisis, and their role is to coordinate the work of the various professionals who are attempting to find a solution to the problem. The problem solving approach suggested by the Toronto Board of Education in 1986 expands the range of activities to include teacher-mediated, classroom-based interventions for students with both secondary and tertiary needs.

As Toronto schools evolve through stages of effective team development, they must address issues related to the establishment of goals, roles, social relationships and balancing needs for content and process issues in group functioning. Maher and Yoshida (1985) describe guidelines for planning and evaluating school teams as being

comprised of a four phase program: (a) clarifying the need; (b) designing a multidisciplinary approach; (c) monitoring team functions; and (d) assessing team outcomes.

Although some schools have evaluated their team outcomes and needs prior to the present study, only the first two phases have been addressed at the Toronto Board on a system-wide basis.

Chapter 2

METHOD

2.1 Sample

In this survey, 50% of Toronto's elementary and secondary schools were selected from each of the three school administrative areas. Altogether 53 elementary and 16 secondary schools were chosen, making up a sample of Toronto's public schools representing schools of different sizes and all types of programs offered (e.g. small versus large schools, single stream versus composite secondary schools, etc.).

Subjects were then selected from the sampled schools. The subjects were comprised of six professional groups who were actively involved with Local School Teams (LSTs): principals/vice-principals; classroom teachers[1]; special education teachers; psychoeducational consultants; social workers and guidance counsellors.

2.2 Instrument

Several sets of questionnaires for the various professional groups were designed in consultation with staff at the Board. The different sets of questionnaires were similar in form and content, with some changes which were designed to reflect staff members' experience with the school team.

The questionnaire addressed to the LST chairperson is reproduced in Appendix A. This is the most comprehensive questionnaire since the chairperson has information about the LST functions which are not always available to other members (e.g. the administrative procedures individual school team used). All other professional groups

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1. In each school, teachers were randomly chosen with a ratio of four teachers to each one of the other professional groups.

received slightly modified versions of the survey. Sections which were included in all questionnaires are indicated in Appendix A.

The first section of the chairperson's instrument requested information about the LST's composition and functions. The second section pertained to the characteristics of students referred to the team. The third section addressed members' experience with their team followed by a fourth section on evaluation of the team and the personal importance attributed to LST goals. The instrument concluded with the identification of professional development needs by staff.

The survey included open-ended questions as well as rating items. On the latter, respondents were asked to rate each item on a 5-point scale, with 1 corresponding to "very seldom" or "not important at all", and 5 corresponding to "very often" or "very important".

2.3 Procedure

Each principal in a selected school was sent questionnaires in sealed envelopes, together with a covering letter pertaining to the dissemination of the questionnaires to the participants in that school. Principals were requested to distribute the survey to the team's chairperson, the special education teacher/head, the guidance counsellor, the psychoeducational consultant, the social worker, and four randomly selected classroom teachers named in the cover letter. If the principal did not act as the LST chairperson, he or she was asked to complete the principal's questionnaire. The survey package also included two additional questionnaires for any other member(s) of the school's team.

Each survey instrument was sent together with a covering letter describing the nature and purpose of the study and requesting staff participation. The recipients of the survey were assured that the questionnaire was anonymous, that research results would be reported in a summary form (not by individual schools), and forwarded to all schools. Subjects were asked to return the survey by approximately 4 weeks from the date of mailing. Each respondent was asked to return the questionnaire in a sealed envelope to the school principal, who collected all the materials and returned them together to the Research Department in an enclosed self-addressed envelope.

Approximately 5 weeks from the date of mailing, each school in the sample was sent a follow-up letter asking to complete and return the survey. Within 7 weeks of the initial mailing, 332 completed surveys had been returned from 54 schools.

2.4 Data Analyses

The response data were analyzed using three statistical procedures - simple frequencies, cross tabulations and Chi-square analysis. The first procedure was employed for tabulating the overall responses, while the last two procedures were for comparing the responses among the different professional groups and between the elementary school and the secondary school respondents.

All five-point scale questionnaire items were processed by collapsing the five scale points (e.g. "very seldom", "seldom", "sometimes", "often", and "very often") into three scale points (e.g. "seldom", "sometimes", and "often"). The intent is to identify general patterns of respondents' opinions and perceptions.

With regard to the open-ended questions, all the answers and comments were reviewed, categorized and coded by two of the authors. The authors then compared their coding schemes, which in most instances were consistent with each other. The few discrepancies that occured were resolved through discussions.

In the following chapter where the findings are discussed, tables and graphical charts are used for summarizing the results and for illustrating the response patterns.

Chapter 3

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

3.1 Response Rate and Respondents' Characteristics

Among the sampled schools to which questionnaires were sent, 43 elementary and 11 secondary schools responded. The response rates were 81% and 69% respectively. Each of these schools returned several sets of questionnaires, depending on the number of school team members and other school staff members who volunteered to participate. A total of 332 returned questionnaires were received.

The 332 respondents included staff from the following professional groups:

- Classroom Teachers	32% (106)
- Principals / Vice-principals	23% (75)
- Special Education Teachers/Heads	15% (48)
- Psychoeducational Consultants	14% (46)
- Social Workers	9% (29)
- Guidance Counsellors[2]	5% (17)
- Nurses	2% (5)
- Others	1% (3)

Most (84%) of the respondents were either members of their local school teams (LSTs) or had participated in their school teams on at least one occasion. The others (16%), mostly classroom teachers[3], were neither members nor participants but

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2. It is important to note that although guidance counsellors are available in all secondary schools, such a position is virtually non-existent in elementary schools, except for a few. Consequently, the number of guidance counsellors in this study was relatively small when compared with other professional groups. Nonetheless, the response rate was high in light of the fact that from the 11 respondent secondary schools, 14 guidance counsellors (and three from the elementary panel) returned their questionnaires.

3. Two-thirds of the teachers were either members or had participated in their school teams, but the other one-third were neither members nor participants.

volunteered to share their opinions on issues related to the goals and roles of school teams.

Table 3.1 shows the years of experience the team members or participants had in LSTs. Nearly half (49%) of these members/participants had taken part in school teams for between three and six years, and over a quarter (27%) had more than six years of experience. It should, however, be noted that quite a significant proportion of the respondents (nearly 20%) had less than three years experience. In fact, about a third (31%) of the classroom teachers who had participated in their school teams, and almost a fifth (18%) of the team chairpersons in this survey were somewhat new to LSTs. These findings reflect, in part, the number of staff newly promoted to principal and vice-principal positions (often acting as chairpersons), and the number of new teachers who have joined the Toronto Board in recent years.

Table 3.1: Years of Experience in LSTs

Number of Years	OVERALL (N=273)	CHAIR-PERSON (n=39)	CLASSROOM TEACHER (n=67)	OTHER MEMBERS (n=167)
Less than 1 year	10 (4%)	2 (5%)	2 (3%)	6 (4%)
1 – 2 years	40 (15%)	5 (13%)	19 (28%)	16 (10%)
3 – 4 years	70 (26%)	10 (26%)	18 (27%)	42 (25%)
5 – 6 years	62 (23%)	10 (26%)	6 (9%)	46 (28%)
7 – 10 years	52 (19%)	7 (18%)	12 (18%)	32 (19%)
More than 10 years	22 (8%)	2 (5%)	3 (4%)	17 (10%)
Missing Data	18 (7%)	3 (8%)	7 (10%)	8 (5%)

3.2 LST Composition

3.2.1 School Team Chairpersons

Of the 31 elementary school chairpersons who returned their questionnaires, almost all were school administrators - 13 principals and 16 vice-principals. According to most of these chairpersons, the reason for acting as the LST chair had to do with their administrative position. A few cited other reasons such as "interest and skills" (4), and "democratically chosen" (6). The fact that nearly half of the school teams were chaired by the principals clearly demonstrates the existence of school administrative support for LSTs in the elementary panel. The remaining two elementary school chairpersons were special education teachers.

At the secondary school level, five of the eight chairpersons who returned their questionnaires were guidance counsellors or heads, only two were school administrators, and the other was a special education head. There was no predominant reason given as to why they were the chair of their respective teams.

As chairpersons, most (71%) reported that they were responsible for scheduling meetings and co-ordinating follow-up to recommendations made during LST discussions.

3.2.2 Memberships

Regular memberships in virtually all LSTs in the survey consisted of principals or vice-principals, psychoeducational consultants, social workers, and special education teachers/heads. In addition, many secondary school LSTs also included guidance counsellors/heads and school nurses as part of their regular memberships. At the elementary level, however, school nurses were invited members. Parents were mostly invited to team meetings on an as-needed basis.

In over half of the elementary schools (58%), referring classroom teachers participated in team meetings. Subject teachers were invited members when necessary. At the secondary school level, classroom teachers participated less frequently in team meetings. Indeed, only two secondary school chairpersons reported that their team memberships included classroom teachers.

3.3 LST General Procedures

3.3.1 Team Meetings - Frequency, Duration and Agenda

One of the major characteristics of LSTs is that the teams meet regularly. Nearly half (47%) of the LSTs in the survey met once every two weeks.[4] It should, however, be noted that elementary school LSTs tended to meet more frequently than their secondary school counterparts. As shown in Table 3.2, nine of the 31 elementary school chairpersons reported meeting once a week, as compared to only one of the eight secondary school chairpersons who reported so. In fact, at the secondary school level, few LSTs met more than twice a month.

Table 3.2: Frequency of Team Meetings

Frequency Met	OVERALL (LSTs=39)	ELEMENTARY (LSTs=31)	SECONDARY (LSTs=8)
Once a week	10 (26%)	9	1
Once every two weeks	18 (46%)	15	3
Once a month	9 (23%)	6	3
Missing Data	2 (5%)	1	1

Not only did elementary school LSTs meet more often, generally their meetings also lasted longer than those of the secondary school LSTs. A typical LST meeting at an elementary school would last 2.5 hours, while a typical LST meeting at the secondary level would be an hour shorter. (See Table 3.3.) Correspondingly, elementary school LSTs could allot more time (about half an hour) for discussion of each referred student than their secondary school counterparts (about 15 minutes).

Table 3.3: Duration of a Team Meeting

Meeting Time	OVERALL (LSTs=39)	ELEMENTARY (LSTs=31)	SECONDARY (LSTs=8)
1 – 1.5 hour	6 (15%)	1	5
2 – 2.5 hours	18 (46%)	17	1
3 or more hours	12 (31%)	11	1
Missing Data	4 (10%)	2	2

4. Note that only chairpersons were asked to answer questions regarding the routine functioning of their school teams. Since only 39 chairperson questionnaires were received, the base figure for the number of LSTs discussed in this section was 39.

Both elementary and secondary school LST chairpersons indicated that on average up to 76% of their meeting time was allotted for discussion of individual students. Less than a quarter of the time was left for discussing other issues - approximately 12% for classroom issues, and less than 10% for each of team issues, groups of students, and school issues. Indeed, as indicated in Table 3.4, some LSTs spent very little or no time at all on issues other than those related to individual students. Respondents often cited "lack of time" as a reason for focusing primarily on the needs of individual students.

Table 3.4: Proportions of Time for Discussing Various Issues

ISSUES	Percentage of Time	OVERALL (LSTs=39)	ELEMENTARY (LSTs=31)	SECONDARY (LSTs=8)
Discussed Individual Students	40 – 50%	7 (18%)	5	2
	60 – 75%	10 (26%)	8	2
	over 75%	20 (53%)	17	3
Discussed Classroom Issues	0%	12 (32%)	10	2
	less than 10%	10 (26%)	7	3
	10%	9 (24%)	9	0
	20 – 33%	6 (16%)	4	2
	70%	1 (3%)	1	0
Discussed Team Issues	0%	7 (18%)	7	0
	less than 10%	17 (45%)	13	4
	10%	11 (29%)	8	3
	20 – 33%	3 (8%)	3	0
Discussed Groups of Students	0%	16 (42%)	15	1
	less than 10%	13 (34%)	9	4
	10%	8 (21%)	6	2
	20 – 33%	1 (3%)	1	0
Discussed School Issues	0%	15 (39%)	15	0
	less than 10%	12 (32%)	8	4
	10%	9 (24%)	6	3
	20 – 33%	2 (5%)	2	0

Chairpersons were also asked to indicate the proportion of time spent describing individual student's needs versus planning interventions. Elementary school chairpersons reported more time being spent on the former (average - 53%) than on the latter (average - 47%). The reverse is true for the secondary level: their chairpersons reported more time (average - 60%) spent planning interventions than describing the student's needs (average - 40%).

During discussion of individual referred students, various sources of information were reviewed by the school teams. The sources that were regularly reviewed included:

	LSTs (n=39)
- Ontario Student Record (O.S.R.)	100%
- Work Samples	97%
- Psychological Reports	97%
- Social Work Reports	89%
- Special Education Reports	79%

Some chairpersons mentioned that their teams reviewed additional data such as attendance records, medical records and observational notes.

3.3.2 Other Administrative Procedures

A number of team chairpersons reported the use of various administrative procedures in order to improve efficiency. The procedure most commonly cited (by 87% of the chairpersons) was summarizing information and action plans on forms. (See Appendix B.) Some chairpersons (24%) reported setting the agenda ahead of the meeting, thereby giving team members time to prepare by reviewing information about the students and/or observing them in class, a procedure which can increase efficacy and efficiency. Some chairpersons also reported procedures to facilitate follow-up, such as providing minutes to team members, assigning specific tasks and arranging for students to be monitored in subsequent meetings.

3.4 School Team Goals

Seven school team goals were listed in the questionnaire. All respondents, including those who were neither regular nor invited members of the LST, were asked to rate (on a scale of 1 to 5) the personal importance they attribute to each of the goals. The percentages below indicate the proportions of the total respondents who rated each of the following goals as "very important" or "important".

	(N = 332)
- Understanding individual student needs and planning appropriate interventions in school, in the community and at home.	89%
- Providing multidisciplinary consultation to school personnel re: the needs of individual students.	82%
- Facilitating referrals for specialized services: (Educational, Pscyhological, Social Work.)	77%
- Co-ordinating specialized group work or other programs for students "at risk".	73%
- Co-ordinating the work of team members.	71%
- Monitoring referrals for Special Education placement.	67%
- Identifying common student needs and planning schoolwide preventive programs and procedures.	66%

Although all seven goals were rated as "very important" or "important" by the majority of the respondents, some goals were given greater importance than others. The two most important goals dealt with understanding individual student's needs and planning appropriate interventions. Less importance was placed on identifying common student needs and planning schoolwide preventive programs. These priorities reflect the fact that more LST meeting time was spent discussing individual students than other broader issues.

There was a high degree of consensus among the professional groups regarding the role of the team in understanding and planning for the needs of individual students. A closer examination, however, indicates some discrepancies as to the degree of significance given to the other team functions. As shown in Table 3.5, while over 70% of the principals rated all the stated goals, except for referrals for special education placement, as important, classroom teachers tended to perceive fewer goals as important. For the classroom teachers, the only three goals which were rated by over

70% of the teachers as important were: understanding individual student's needs, referrals for specialized services, and referrals for special education placement.

In many ways, special education teachers' responses were similar to those of the guidance counsellors[5]. For both groups, the only goal that was rated by less than 70% of the respondents as important was "identifying common needs and planning schoolwide preventive programs". It should, however, be noted that special education teachers tended to place a heavier emphasis on referrals for special education placement, whereas all but one of the 17 guidance counsellors found referrals for specialized services important.

The other two support groups - psychoeducational consultants and social workers - also bore many similarities in their perceptions of LST goals. In both groups, a high percentage (about 80%, which was higher than other groups) of their members rated "identifying common student needs and planning schoolwide preventive programs" as one of the important goals. The main variance between the two groups was that while psychoeducational consultants were least likely to endorse the two referral related goals, social workers were comparatively more likely to do so, especially with regard to referrals for specialized services.

Table 3.5: LST Goals by Professional Groups

LST Goals	PRINCIPAL or VP (n=73)	CLASSROOM TEACHER (n=106)	SP. ED. TEACHER (n=48)	GUIDANCE COUNSELLOR (n=17)	PSYCHO-ED CONSULTANT (n=46)	SOCIAL WORKER (n=29)
Understand individual student needs and plan appropriate interventions.	92%	77%	98%	88%	98%	90%
Provide multidisciplinary consultation to school staff re: individual student needs.	88%	67%	90%	88%	96%	90%
Facilitate referrals for specialized servcies ...	75%	79%	77%	94%	59%	86%
Coordinate the work of team members.	77%	52%	79%	82%	83%	79%
Coordinate specialized group work or other programs for students "at risk".	82%	65%	77%	76%	74%	69%
Monitor referrals for Special Education placement.	64%	73%	83%	71%	41%	59%
Identify common student needs and ... plan schoolwide preventative programs ...	73%	55%	62%	59%	78%	79%

5. Owing to the small sample size of guidance counsellors, caution has to be made in interpreting their group percentages.

3.5 Students Referred to LSTs

3.5.1 Referral Rates

The number of students referred and discussed each year varied from team to team. (See Table 3.6.) For elementary schools, the mean number of students discussed per year by a school team was 62 but the range was 20-250; for secondary schools, the mean was 79 and the range was 30-200.

Table 3.6: Number of Students Discussed Each Year

No. of Students	OVERALL (LSTs=39)	ELEMENTARY (LSTs=31)	SECONDARY (LSTs=8)
20–29	3 (8%)	3	0
30–39	12 (31%)	9	3
40–49	2 (5%)	2	0
50–59	4 (10%)	3	1
60–69	1 (3%)	0	1
70 or more*	11 (28%)	9	2
Missing Data	7 (18%)	5	2

*Elementary - range=20-250; Secondary - range=30-200.

According to the chairpersons, over half of these students were discussed on more than one occasion - an average of 60% for the elementary, and 75% for the secondary. Most of the referred students were not forwarded to either Local or Area IPRC. At the elementary school level, a third or fewer of these students were forwarded to either IPRC. At the secondary school level, 20% of the students or less were subsequently forwarded to an IPRC.

3.5.2 Charactertics of Referred Students

Altogether 46 student characteristics items were listed in the questionnaire. The items relate to students' (i) academic performance, (ii) learning style and study skills, (iii) social skills, (iv) emotional problems, and (v) psychosocial attributes. All members were asked to rate, on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = very seldom, 5 = very often), how often students referred to LSTs have the characteristics mentioned.[6] About half of the items were positive statements, and the other half were problem-oriented statements. As we shall

6. Only LST members or those who had participated in their school teams were asked to rate these items. Therefore, as shown in the following discussion, the base figure was 274 instead of 332 - the latter figure included respondents who had not participated in their school teams.

see, the respondents tended to rate "seldom" for positive characteristics but "often" for items that were problem-related.

Academic Performance

Table 3.7 shows the respondents' opinions about the referred students' academic performance in eight areas - oral language, reading, spelling, written language, math, handwriting, general knowledge, and need for advanced programming. It is clear that the referred students were seldom seen by the majority of the members as at or above level in most of these academic areas. Apparently, most students were referred to LSTs because teachers saw them as having learning problems. Although LSTs also provide a vehicle for addressing needs for enriched or accelerated programming, such referrals were much rarer on the team agendas.

Table 3.7: Student Characteristics - Academic Performance

Academic Performance At or Above Level	OVERALL (N=274)			ELEMENTARY (n=217)			SECONDARY (n=57)			
	Often	Some-times	Seldom	Often	Some-times	Seldom	Often	Some-times	Seldom	
Oral language is at or above level	23%	24%	47%	26%	27%	43%	12%	16%	61%	*
Reading is at or above level	5%	13%	77%	6%	14%	77%	3%	9%	81%	
Spelling is at or above level	4%	11%	80%	5%	12%	80%	0%	9%	81%	
Written language is at or above level	4%	11%	80%	5%	12%	80%	2%	7%	82%	
Math is at or above level	12%	35%	50%	13%	40%	45%	7%	16%	70%	*
Handwriting is at or above level	5%	32%	57%	6%	34%	58%	2%	26%	61%	
General knowledge is at or above level	13%	40%	43%	16%	41%	40%	3%	35%	53%	*
Requires advanced/enriched programming	5%	15%	75%	6%	18%	72%	2%	5%	86%	*

*Statistically significant difference between elementary and secondary response at $p<.05$.

In general, both elementary and secondary school members had similar perceptions of the referred students' academic standing. However, as indicated in Table 3.7, many more secondary school respondents than their elementary school counterparts found their referred students to have problems in oral language, math and general knowledge. In fact, virtually none of the secondary school members indicated that the students referred to their school teams required advanced or enriched programming.

Active Learning and Study Skills

Eight active learning and study skills items were listed. It is evident in Table 3.8 that these active learning attributes were seldom discussed. These findings are consistent with the information presented in Table 3.7, which indicates that LSTs tend to discuss academic weaknesses much more frequently than academic strengths.

Table 3.8: Student Characteristics - Active Learning and Study Skills

Active Learning & Study Skills	OVERALL (N=274)			ELEMENTARY (n=217)			SECONDARY (n=57)			
	Often	Some-times	Seldom	Often	Some-times	Seldom	Often	Some-times	Seldom	
Is task committed	7%	18%	70%	8%	19%	69%	2%	16%	75%	
Is motivated to learn	15%	32%	49%	17%	33%	46%	5%	28%	61%	
Completes homework/project	5%	25%	65%	6%	27%	62%	2%	18%	74%	
Prepares for quizzes, tests, exams	4%	21%	63%	3%	23%	61%	7%	16%	70%	
Participates actively in class	8%	42%	44%	9%	28%	40%	5%	46%	60%	*
Seeks help appropriately	4%	29%	62%	5%	32%	58%	2%	17%	75%	
Likes academic challenges	4%	20%	70%	5%	24%	67%	2%	7%	82%	*
Daily work is adequate, but has difficulty with tests or quizzes	13%	27%	50%	11%	27%	53%	23%	30%	39%	

*Statistically significant difference between elementary and secondary response at $p<.05$.

Similar responses were found for items related to specific learning characteristics. That is, respondents were more likely to answer "seldom" for items concerning specific learning strengths, but "often" for items pertaining to specific learning weaknesses. Table 3.9 illustrates that students presented for team discussions were viewed seldom exhibiting learning strengths but often showing learning weaknesses. They were often described as passive learners, needing extra explanations when new information was taught, and often forgetting instructions.

Table 3.9: Student Characteristics - Specific Learning Characteristics

Specific Learning Characteristics	OVERALL (N=274)			ELEMENTARY (n=217)			SECONDARY (n=57)			
	Often	Some-times	Seldom	Often	Some-times	Seldom	Often	Some-times	Seldom	
Strengths										
Catches on to new ideas quickly	7%	27%	62%	7%	29%	60%	3%	21%	70%	
Is creative/has many interests	7%	30%	59%	8%	32%	57%	3%	23%	67%	
Can work in a co-operative group	8%	43%	43%	9%	44%	42%	5%	42%	46%	
Manages time appropriately	8%	13%	74%	10%	16%	70%	2%	5%	88%	*
Work is adequately organized, tidy	4%	17%	75%	5%	19%	72%	2%	9%	86%	
On the whole attends well	12%	30%	54%	13%	30%	53%	9%	32%	56%	
Can tolerate frustration	9%	21%	63%	10%	22%	63%	7%	19%	65%	
Weaknesses										
Works at task when watched or compelled	58%	21%	16%	61%	20%	14%	49%	26%	21%	
Needs extra explanations to understand new ideas	75%	12%	8%	77%	11%	7%	67%	17%	9%	
Is likely to forget instructions or routines	72%	18%	7%	75%	15%	7%	60%	28%	9%	
Works too quickly, makes careless mistakes	37%	41%	17%	37%	43%	16%	39%	32%	23%	
Works steadily, but too slowly to finish...	27%	42%	24%	29%	42%	22%	21%	42%	30%	

*Statistically significant difference between elementary and secondary response at $p<.05$.

Social Skills

As shown in Table 3.10, most members did not describe the referred students as being unusually strong or weak in the social skills area. Rather over a third of the members indicated that these students sometimes (neither often nor seldom) exhibited positive social attributes. There was still a tendency, however, to identify positive social skills attributes less often and negative attributes more often.

A striking exception to the rule is that the majority of the members said that referred students often "appreciate attention from teachers". This is the only positive item in the entire list of 46 student characteristics which was frequently attributed to referred students. It is understandable that students with academic difficulties and passive or inefficient learning styles would be especially appreciative of attention from their teachers.

Table 3.10: Student Characteristics - Social Skills

Social Skills	OVERALL (N=274)			ELEMENTARY (n=217)			SECONDARY (n=57)			
	Often	Some-times	Seldom	Often	Some-times	Seldom	Often	Some-times	Seldom	
Positive Attributes										
Obeys school rules	19%	45%	31%	21%	46%	29%	14%	39%	40%	
Appropriate social skills with teachers and pe	12%	38%	45%	14%	40%	42%	4%	33%	56%	
Enjoys extra-curricular activities	22%	39%	32%	20%	36%	36%	28%	49%	17%	*
Appreciates attention from teachers	64%	19%	11%	65%	19%	11%	60%	21%	12%	
Negative Attributes										
Is frequently in arguments/fights	38%	34%	24%	37%	32%	27%	44%	39%	11%	
Acts impulsively	51%	32%	13%	50%	31%	15%	54%	35%	7%	
Quiet, withdrawn	26%	47%	23%	23%	46%	27%	40%	47%	9%	*

*Statistically significant difference between elementary and secondary response at $p<.05$.

In many respects, both elementary and secondary school team members had similar responses to these social skills items. However, as shown Table 3.10, a significantly higher percentage of the elementary school members characterized their referred students as "quiet and withdrawn" than their secondary school counterparts.

Emotional Problems

In describing students' emotional problems, except for phobias, equal numbers of respondents indicated that such problems occurred "seldom", "sometimes" or "often" among referred students. (See Table 3.11.) This may reflect respondents' lack of familiarity with these constructs, or that such issues were not consistently addressed by referring teachers. Interestingly, team members were much more consistent in identifying phobias as an attribute that seldom characterized referred students.

Table 3.11: Student Characteristics - Emotional Problems

Emotional Problems	OVERALL (N=274)			ELEMENTARY (n=217)			SECONDARY (n=57)		
	Often	Some-times	Seldom	Often	Some-times	Seldom	Often	Some-times	Seldom
Is unhappy, depressed	35%	33%	27%	32%	35%	30%	49%	28%	18%
Has nervous habits	26%	35%	35%	24%	35%	36%	32%	33%	30%
Is worried, anxious	45%	31%	20%	44%	31%	21%	51%	32%	14%
Has phobias	9%	24%	58%	8%	23%	59%	12%	26%	51%

Psychosocial Stressors

Overall, while the referred students tended to have problems related to family stressors and school non-attendance, they seldom had such problems as substance abuse, child abuse, or medical needs. (See Table 3.12.)

Table 3.12: Student Characteristics - Psychosocial Stressors

Psycho–social Stressors	OVERALL (N=274)			ELEMENTARY (n=217)			SECONDARY (n=57)			
	Often	Some-times	Seldom	Often	Some-times	Seldom	Often	Some-times	Seldom	
Substance abuse	2%	11%	77%	1%	5%	84%	9%	32%	53%	*
Child abuse	7%	17%	68%	6%	13%	74%	14%	32%	46%	*
Medical needs	12%	23%	59%	10%	18%	65%	18%	39%	37%	*
Attendance issues	30%	29%	37%	21%	33%	43%	67%	14%	16%	*
Family stressors	57%	19%	18%	54%	18%	22%	67%	19%	5%	*

*Statistically significant difference between elementary and secondary response at $p<.05$.

However, as shown in the table above, a significantly higher percentage of secondary school LST respondents than the elementary school respondents characterized their referred students as having substance abuse, child abuse, family stressors, and attendance problems. Not surprisingly, a futher analysis indicates that a notably higher percentage of psychoeducational consultants (82%) and social workers (78%) identified family stressors as an attribute of referred students than the school staff - principals/vice-principals (55%), special educators (55%) and classroom teachers (44%).

ESL Needs

As shown in Table 3.13, about a third of the members saw language of home (when not English) as an attribute of referred students which was often related to their referral. Whether such ESL "needs" are seen to be a characteristic of of students with academic problems or those with social/emotional problems, or both, is unclear.

Table 3.13: Student Characteristics - ESL Needs

	OVERALL (N=274)			ELEMENTARY (n=217)			SECONDARY (n=57)		
	Often	Some-times	Seldom	Often	Some-times	Seldom	Often	Some-times	Seldom
ESL Needs	31%	24%	37%	33%	23%	37%	25%	26%	37%

The Toronto Board has a long history of receiving immigrant students and fostering multicultural programs. Many support systems have been developed to meet the needs of ESL students, and the LST should be viewed as one of these avenues. The above finding might indicate needs of ESL students over and above those related to the acquisition of English as a second language, or that their needs were described in other characteristics mentioned above.

A Summary of Respondents' Report of Referred Students' Characterstics

Overall, it appears that students were referred to school teams more often for academic and learning needs and less often because of emotional concerns or pyschosocial problems. These findings contrast with the results of the Ontario Child Health Study (Offord, Boyle and Racine, 1990) which reported that mental health problems among children occur as frequently as academic problems. One explanation for the findings might be related to the fact that children with emotional problems are usually not doing well academically, and their academic weaknesses become the "symptoms" which often result in referral to the LST. In other words, students with emotional or psychosocial problems might not be under-referred. Nevertheless, school teams may still need to find ways for increasing their members' awareness of these issues given the importance of students' emotional well being and its relationship to effective learning (Hargreaves & Earl, 1990). Indeed, current Ministry of Education guidelines have emphasized the importance of educating the "whole" child and the fostering of social and emotional growth, as well as cognitive and academic skills.

3.6 Members' Participation and Contributions

3.6.1 Joint Decisions and Participation

The majority of the respondents indicated that all team members were actively encouraged to have input before decisions were made (83%); that follow-up activities were jointly determined by team members (78%); and that they participated in decision making (83%). Interestingly, principals/vice-principals, and guidance counsellors[7], who often chaired their school teams, agreed with the above statements significantly more often than other team members. (See Table 3.14 and Figure 3.1.) This may suggest that although they intended to encourage the active participation of all involved, there were occasions when their perception of the team process might be inaccurate.

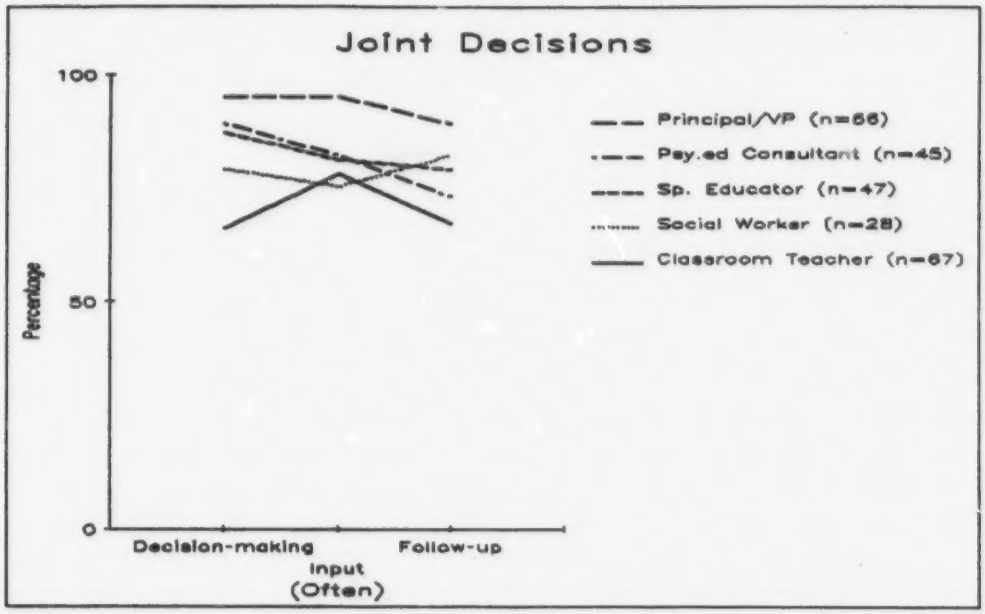
Classroom teachers, on the other hand, were comparatively less likely to rate their experience with the team as often having these democratic attributes. For instance, only two-thirds of the teachers - considerably fewer than was the case of other professional groups - agreed that they participated in team decision making or in determining follow-up activities. Since referring teachers are not regular members of the team, it may be necessary to make an extra effort to ensure that they are comfortable with the team process, feel supported by other team members, and are urged to take an active part in the discussion and in the decision-making process.

Table 3.14: Joint Decisions - Response Results of Professional Groups

Joint Decisions	PRINCIPAL or VP (n=66)	SP. ED. TEACHER (n=47)	SOCIAL WORKER (n=28)	GUIDANCE COUNSELLOR (n=13)	CLASSROOM TEACHER (n=67)	PSYCHO-ED CONSULTANT (n=45)	
Decision-making	95%	87%	79%	92%	66%	89%	*
Input before decisions	95%	81%	75%	85%	78%	82%	
Follow-up jointly determine	89%	79%	82%	92%	67%	73%	*

*Statistically significant at $p<.05$.

7. In order to avoid misrepresentation of the group due to the small sample size (13 guidance counsellors who were members of LST), their response pattern is not illustrated graphically, although the group's response results are still presented in a table form. It is also worth reminding that caution has to be made when interpreting their group percentages.



- I participate in decision making.
- All team members are actively encouraged to have input before decisions are made.
- Follow-up activities are jointly determined by team members.

Figure 3.1: Joint Decisions - Response Patterns of Professional Groups

When asked to comment on how their school team goals, responsibilities and organization were decided upon, nearly two-thirds (64%) of the respondents reported that the decision was made as a result of team discussion and consensus. But again, some professional groups, such as principals (76%) and special education teachers (72%), were more likely to make such statements as compared with classroom teachers (48%).[8] A small group of respondents (13%) said that their school team goals, responsibilities, and organization were decided on by the school administration. It is interesting that few, if any, respondents identified the school's teaching staff as having significant input into school team goals and planning.

8. Such statements were also made by 67% of the psychoeducational consultants, and 57% of the social workers.

According to the respondents, information regarding the goals and functions of their school teams was conveyed to the teaching staff through various channels:

	Respondents (n = 332)
Formal Channels	
- Staff meeting.	39%
- Memo from the team or school administrator.	19%
- Circulating minutes of team meetings.	4%
- By the school administration.	4%
Informal Channels	
- By team members to individual teachers.	22%
- When teachers attend team meetings.	12%
- Other - e.g. informal meetings, workshops.	2%

It should be noted that many school teams adopted more than one communication channel. In fact, some respondents (13%) mentioned both formal and informal ways of conveying LST information to the teaching staff. In any event, about half (52%) of the respondents indicated that their school teams used at least one formal channel of communicating information about the team - such as staff meetings or memos - that would ensure the information being received by the entire school staff. Nineteen percent of the other respondents indicated the use of informal channel(s) only, and the rest (29%) either said information not conveyed well or gave no answers.

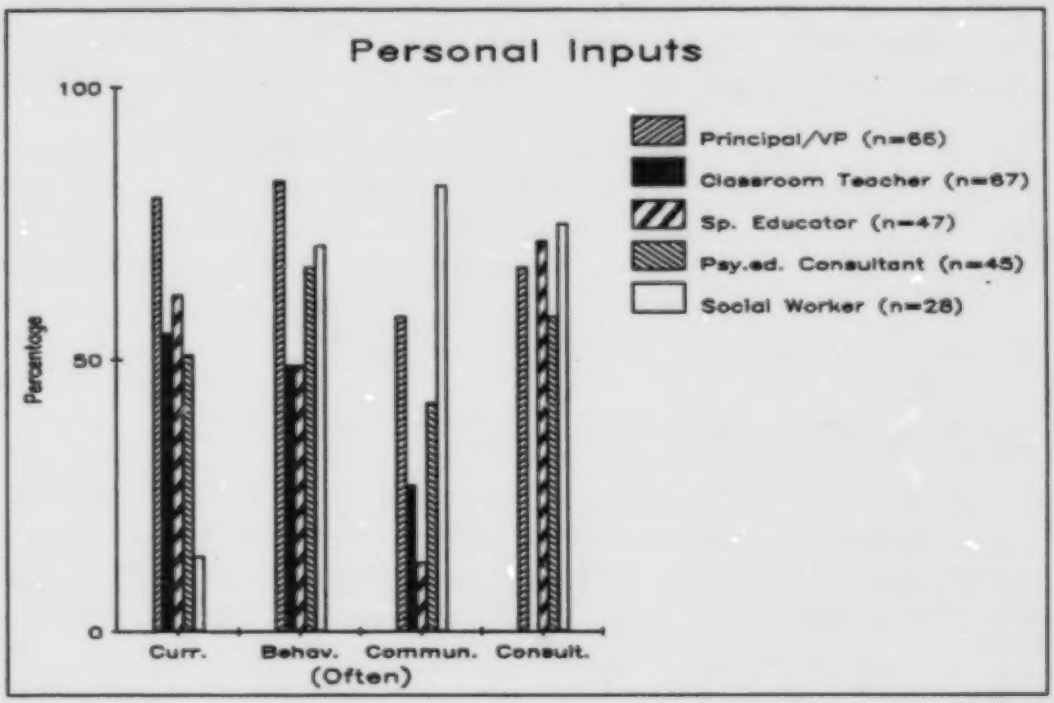
3.6.2 Team Members' Contributions

Team members or participants were asked to indicate the helpful contributions that members brought to the teams. Overall, the answers suggest that a joint problem-solving process provided peer support and increased the effectiveness of decision-making. Below are some of the more often cited contributions:

	Members (n = 274)
- Unique perspective of each profession.	40%
- Provide information about the student.	25%
- Accurate assessment of the problem.	23%
- Networking/support for staff.	19%
- Explore avenues for intervention.	18%
- Willingness to help; concern for student.	10%

3.6.3 Types of Input by Individual Members

Figure 3.2 provides information about the kinds of recommendations and suggestions offered by team members during team meetings. It is clear that some professional groups were more likely to provide certain types of input than others.



- During meetings I provide suggestions for curriculum modifications. (Statistically significant at $p < .05$.)
- During meetings I provide suggestions for behavioural management strategies. (Statistically significant at $p < .05$.)
- During meetings I provide recommendations for community services. (Statistically significant at $p < .05$.)
- I provide follow-up consultation to teachers.

Figure 3.2: Kinds of Inputs - Response Patterns of Professional Groups

For instance, principals adopted a leadership role and were especially likely to say that they contributed suggestions regarding curriculum modifications (80%) and behavioural management strategies (83%). Social workers, on the other hand, were least likely to report making suggestions for curriculum modifications (14%), but most likely to report providing recommendations for community services (82%). Psychoeducational consultants seemed to make more frequent suggestions on behavioural management

(67%) than on curriculum modifications (55%) and community services (42%). Special education teachers, on the other hand, tended to contribute more in terms of curriculum modifications (62%) than in behavioural management (49%) or community services (13%).

In addition to the above input, the majority of the principals (67%), special education teachers (72%), psychoeducational consultants (58%), and social workers (75%) also reported providing frequent follow-up consultation to classroom teachers.

As for the classroom teachers, about 50% reported making suggestions in curriculum modifications and behavioural management, and 27% reported providing recommendations for community services. The relatively low percentage rate may be explained by the fact that many teachers come to LST after they have tried to modify the students' program in their classroom, and they come to seek help from the team, rather than to make suggestions and recommendations.

3.6.4 Specific Skills & Tasks of Different Professional Groups

Respondents were asked to select one or two specific skills and tasks they thought different professional representatives brought to their school teams over and above those suggested by their job titles. Table 3.15 shows the skills and tasks cited for each of the professional groups.[9] The percentages are the proportions of respondents who mentioned the specific skills or tasks concerned.[10] In order to show the pattern of response more clearly, a cut off was employed, such that results are reported only when 10% or more of the respondents mentioned a particular skill or task as a characteristic of the professional concerned.

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9. The cited skills and tasks for each of the groups, except for guidance counsellors, were based on the answers provided by all LST members or participants (from both the elmentary and secondary panels). For the guidance counsellors, however, only the responses of secondary school members were counted as such a position is not well represented in the elementary school panel.

10. It should be noted that since no suggestions or "forced" answers were given in these questions (see Appendix A), one should expect lower frequencies than otherwise.

Table 3.15: Skills and Tasks of Different Professional Groups

SKILLS	PRINCIPAL or VP	CLASSROOM TEACHER	SP. ED. TEACHER	PSYCHO-ED CONSULTANT	SOCIAL WORKER	GUIDANCE COUNSELLOR
Organization skills & leadership	43%					14%
Specialized professional knowledge	14%		24%	11%	16%	14%
Specialized professional skills			23%	38%	19%	
Knowledge of students, behaviour		49%				11%
Communications skills	13%				19%	
TASKS						
Chair meeting	23%					14%
Coordinate working of members	18%					
Facilitate communication	14%					
Provide info. re: students		25%				
Make recommendations			11%			
Implement recommendations	24%	17%	24%	38%	39%	21%

Classroom teachers were seen primarily as having knowledge and providing information about the students presented to the team and as implementing recommendations made by the LST. They were not seen, however, as making recommendations or sharing their professional knowledge during these multidisciplinary meetings. Special education teachers, on the other hand, were perceived by about a quarter of the respondents as possessing specialized professional knowledge and skills. Social workers were seen as having a range of skills but similar to the psychoeducational consultants who were viewed by close to 40% of the respondents as implementing recommendations. It is interesting that the support staff - psychoeducational consultants and social workers - were most often seen as having their special task of implementing recommendations - such as interviews with students and parents, psychological assessment, individual or small group counselling and contact with community services, while classroom teachers were least often seen as having this responsibility.

It should be noted that although in the previous section, many team members reported making suggestions regarding possible interventions, Table 3.15 assigns the specific tasks of making recommendations only to special education teachers. Since the current question involves open-ended rather than forced-choice responses, it likely pinpoints the role differences which were more salient for the respondents.

As a whole, both the elementary and secondary LST members bore similar perceptions about the skills and tasks of various professional groups, except for those of principals or vice-principals. For the principals, a significantly higher proportion of elementary school members than their secondary school counterparts mentioned organizational skills and leadership, co-ordinating working of team members, and facilitating communication as special skills and tasks school administrators brought to the teams. This is understandable, as many of the elementary school principals/vice-principals had the chairperson role on their LSTs, while this was not the case at the secondary school level.

3.7 Members' Satisfaction with LSTs

3.7.1 Satisfaction Level

In general, the majority of LST members were satisfied with their participation on the team (74%), and found working with other professional disciplines helpful in their skill development (76%). However, as shown in Figure 3.3 and Table 3.16, a significantly higher percentage of principals/vice-principals, special educators, and social workers than classroom teachers and psychoeducational consultants indicated that they were often satisfied with their participation, and that they found the experience helpful.

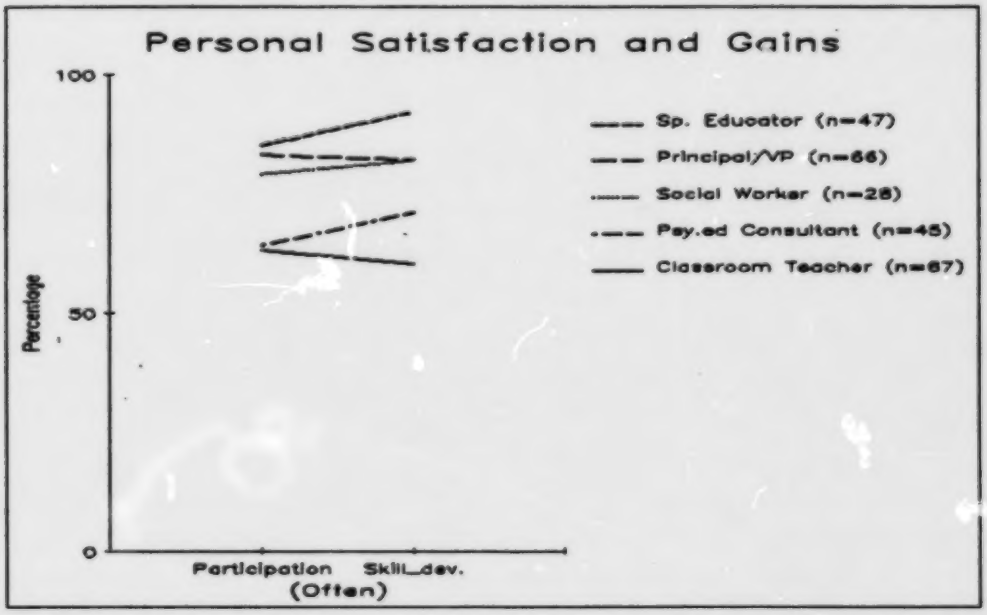

Figure 3.3: Personal Satisfaction and Gains - Response Patterns of Professional Groups

- I am satisfied with my participation on the Team.
- Working with other professional disciplines helped in my skill development.

Table 3.16: Personal Satisfaction and Gains - Response Results of Professional Groups

Personal Satisfaction & Gains	PRINCIPAL or VP (n=66)	SP. ED. TEACHER (n=47)	SOCIAL WORKER (n=28)	GUIDANCE COUNSELLOR (n=13)	CLASSROOM TEACHER (n=67)	PSYCHO-ED CONSULTANT (n=45)	
Participation on the team	83%	85%	79%	77%	63%	64%	*
Skilled development	82%	91%	82%	60%	60%	71%	*

*Statistically significant at $p<.05$.

With regard to the members' satisfaction level with the team process, the majority of the respondents indicated that they were often satisfied with the effectiveness of the team process (68%), that their team often developed a systematic approach to collecting and analyzing information (62%), and that they often feel positive about a problem-solving approach (62%). A large majority of the respondents (81%) were indeed pleased with resulting Team recommendations.

Again, as shown Figure 3.4 and Table 3.17, a significantly higher percentage of principals, special educators, and social workers indicated that they were often satisfied with the team process and resulting recommendations than psychoeducational consultants and classroom teachers.

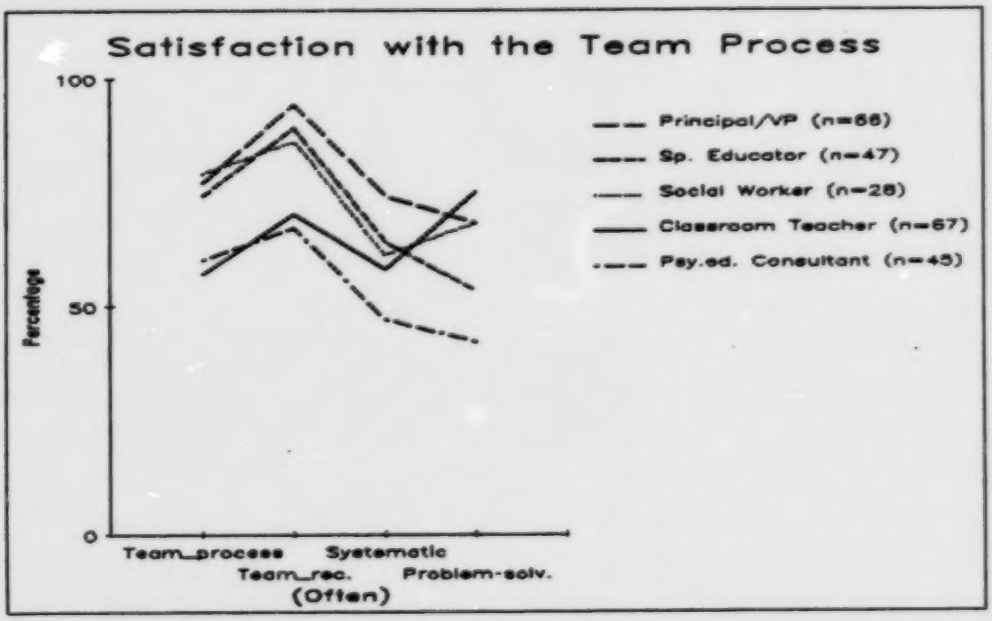

Figure 3.4: Satisfaction with the Team Process - Response Patterns of Professional Groups

- I am satisfied with the effectiveness of the team process.
- I am pleased with resulting Team recommendations.
- Our team developed a systematic approach to collecting and analyzing information.
- I feel positive about a problem-solving approach.

Table 3.17: Satisfaction with the Team Process - Response Results of Professional Groups

Satisfaction with the Team Process	PRINCIPAL or VP (n=66)	SP. ED. TEACHER (n=47)	SOCIAL WORKER (n=28)	GUIDANCE COUNSELLOR (n=13)	CLASSROOM TEACHER (n=67)	PSYCHO-ED CONSULTANT (n=45)	
Team process	77%	74%	79%	69%	57%	60%	
Team recommendations	94%	89%	86%	92%	70%	67%	*
Systematic approach	74%	64%	61%	85%	58%	47%	*
Problem-solving approach	68%	53%	68%	46%	75%	42%	*

*Statistically significant at $p<.05$.

As far as effectiveness of LSTs was concerned, a large majority of the respondents also indicated that their teams were often effective in benefiting students (79%), and that follow-up plans were often implemented (80%). It should, however, be noted that a much lower percentage (53%) of the respondents found their teams had provided an avenue for preventive service.

As shown in Figure 3.5 and Table 3.18, principals, special education teachers and social workers tended to be more positive in their evaluation of team effectiveness than classroom teachers and psychoeducational consultants. Indeed, one in three classroom teachers was not too convinced that LST benefitted students in their schools. A closer examination indicates that many of these teachers did not often participate in their team's decision making process.[11] (See page 31.)

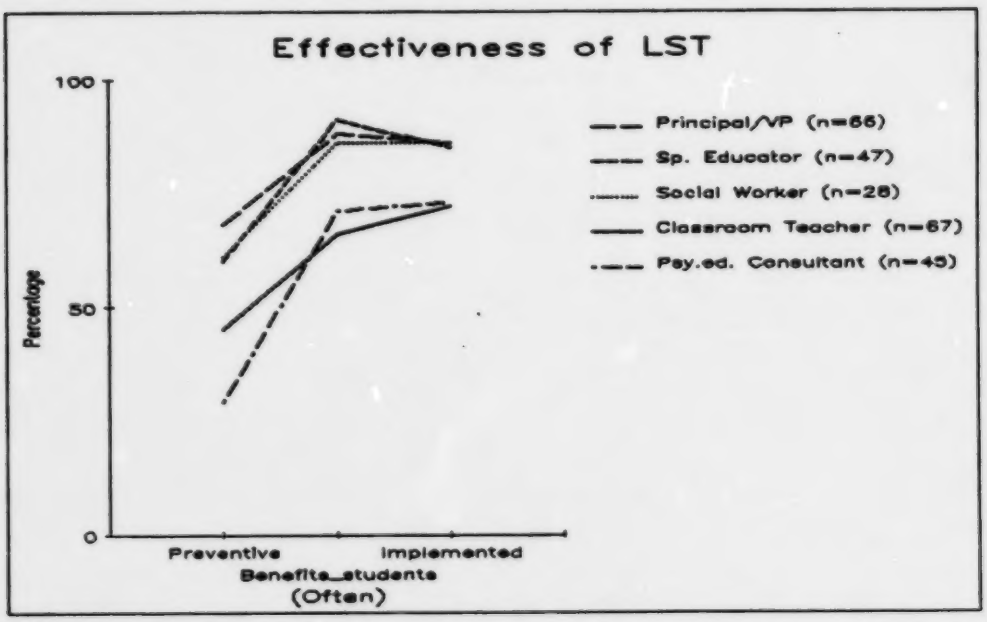

Figure 3.5: Effectiveness of LST - Response Patterns of Professional Groups

- LST has provided an avenue for preventive services.
- LST benefits students in my school.
- Follow-up plans are implemented.

11. A cross tabulation shows that for many (57%) of those who did not find the team often benefitted their students, they also indicated that they did not often participate in team's decision making. On the other hand, for the 66% of the teachers who found LST benefitted their students, most reported that they often participated in decision making.

Table 3.18: Effectiveness of LST - Response Results of Professional Groups

Effectiveness of LST	PRINCIPAL or VP (n=66)	SP. ED. TEACHER (n=47)	SOCIAL WORKER (n=28)	GUIDANCE COUNSELLOR (n=13)	CLASSROOM TEACHER (n=67)	PSYCHO-ED CONSULTANT (n=45)	
Preventive services	68%	60%	61%	69%	45%	29%	*
Benefits studnets	88%	91%	86%	85%	66%	71%	*
Implementing follow-up	86%	85%	86%	92%	72%	73%	

*Statistically significant at $p<.05$.

When asked the extent to which their school teams had accomplished their goals, the majority (76%) of the respondents answered with positive evaluations, even though more principals or vice-principals (83%), social workers (83%), and special educators (83%) gave the positive comments than psychoeducational consultants (71%), and classroom teachers (66%).

Respondents were further asked to indicate the areas in which LSTs performed particularly well. Among the responses given were:

	N = 253
- Co-ordinates plans for intervention, and makes specific recommendations.	47%
- Identifies student needs/problems.	27%
- Monitors students' progress/follow-up.	25%
- Supports teachers.	22%
- Group decision-making.[12]	17%

When asked to specify areas of improvement for their school teams, respondents made various suggestions. These included:

	N = 253
- Focus less on problems and more on intervention strategies.	17%
- Have more teacher involvement.	15%
- Have more time for follow-up.	13%
- More focus on prevention issues for school.	12%

12. The percentage of respondents who cited this item varied from professional group to professional group - social workers (25%), psychoeducational consultants (24%), special education teachers (21%), principals/vice-principals (17%), and classroom teachers (4%). The percentage difference among the various groups is statistically significant, $p = .024$.

- Keep on task. 11%

In summary, the above findings demonstrate that in general team members were satisfied with their school teams. However, the degree of satisfaction was not consistent among the professional groups. Psychoeducational consultants and, particularly, classroom teachers were less satisfied than were school administrators, social workers and special education teachers. Earlier, it was noted that classroom teachers' and psychoeducational consultants' stated goals for the team were somewhat different from each other and from those of other professional groups. For instance, psychoeducational consultants were least likely, and classroom teachers most likely, to endorse goals relating to the provision of specialized services. The planning of classroom interventions, the provision of consultative services and a preventive approach were most likely to be endorsed by psychoeducational consultants, and least likely by classroom teachers. Since the goals of these two groups were somewhat different from those of the other team members, it is understandable that they would view the team as less effective. These results again underscore the importance of clearly understood goals in building an effective team.

3.7.2 Team Evaluation of its own Effectiveness

Self evaluation can be one of the best ways of improving team effectiveness. All professional groups, except for classroom teachers, were asked to respond to three questions regarding the frequency of their team's self monitoring in (i) meeting student needs, (ii) meeting teacher needs, and (iii) participant satisfaction. According to social workers and psychologists, in particular, self evaluation was rarely a focus of team meetings, especially with regard to team's evaluation of participant satisfaction. Nevertheless, all professionals tended to agree that their teams considered their effectiveness in meeting students' needs more often, followed by the consideration of their effectiveness in meeting teachers' needs. (See Figure 3.6 and Table 3.19.)

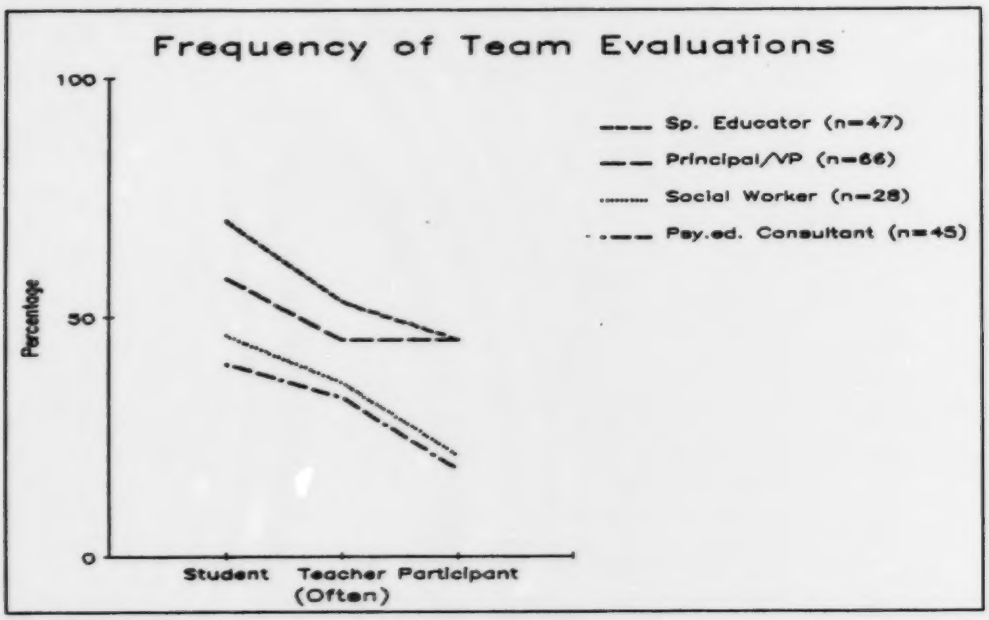

Figure 3.6: Frequency of Team Evaluations - Response Patterns of Professional Groups

- LST evaluates its effectiveness in terms of meeting student needs.
- LST evaluate its effectiveness in terms of meeting teacher needs.
- LST evaluate its effectiveness in terms of participant satisfaction.

Table 3.19: Frequency of Team Evaluations - Response Results of Professional Groups

Team Evaluation of its Own Effectiveness	PRINCIPAL or VP (n=66)	SP. ED. TEACHER (n=47)	SOCIAL WORKER (n=28)	PSYCHO-ED CONSULTANT (n=45)	GUIDANCE COUNSELLOR (n=13)	
Meeting student needs	58%	70%	46%	40%	38%	*
Meeting teacher needs	45%	53%	36%	33%	15%	
Participant satisfaction	45%	45%	21%	18%	31%	*

*Statistically significant at $p<.05$.

3.8 Team Meeting Frequency and its Relationship with Members' Satisfaction and Participation

When team meetings are held regularly and frequently, it is possible not only to deal with a broader range of issues, but also to respond more efficiently and effectively to crises. This survey found corroboration for this point of view in that the frequency of team meetings was significantly related with team members' involvement in decision making, their involvement with behavioural management issues in the classroom, and their personal satisfaction with the effectiveness of the team process. (See Table 3.20.)

Table 3.20: Team Meeting Frequency and Members' Satisfaction and Participation Level

	Members who met weekly or biweekly	Members who met monthly	Significance Level*
Very often satisfied with the effectiveness of the team process	37%	14%	p=.049
Often participate in decision making	88%	69%	p=.012
Often provide suggestions for behavioural management strategies	68%	45%	p=.018

3.9 Staff Development

Finally, all respondents were asked to suggest any issues or topics related to the functioning of school teams that they would like future professional development sessions to address. Overall, 58% of the respondents recommended at least one topic or issue. However, it should be noted that some professional groups were more likely to make such recommendations than others. For instance, about three-quarters of the social workers, psychoeducational consultants, and special educators offered at least one suggested topic, while a lower percentage of principals or vice-principals (52%) and classroom teachers (47%) did so. These findings might be related, in part, to the fact that teachers were viewed primarily as presenting information about individual problem children, while other professional groups were regular team members who were more familiar with team process issues.

Table 3.21 summarizes the recommendations and suggestions gathered from the survey.

Table 3.21: Staff Development Topics and Issues

PD Topics / Issues	OVERALL (N=332)	PRINCIPAL or VP (n=75)	CLASSROOM TEACHER (n=106)	SP. ED. TEACHER (n=48)	PSYCHO-ED CONSULTANT (n=46)	SOCIAL WORKER (n=29)	GUIDANCE COUNSELLOR (n=17)	
re: possible interventions ...	26%	20%	18%	42%	39%	28%	24%	*
PD for teachers	20%	17%	21%	25%	24%	10%	18%	
re: team process	18%	19%	10%	13%	26%	45%	18%	*
re: children & their needs ...	11%	12%	8%	17%	9%	17%	6%	
re: preventive programming	6%	4%	3%	8%	11%	10%	0%	

*Statistically significant at $p<.05$.

- PD related to a better understanding of possible interventions. (Classroom strategies examples - deal more effectively with attendance, dealing with parent concerns.)
- PD for teachers - e.g. how the team functions, how to identify appropriate team referrals, and inservice for new teachers.
- PD related to team process - e.g. how to evaluate team effectiveness, how to improve team organization, team cohesion and team communication.
- PD related to better understanding of children, their learning needs, and the factors that influence them - e.g. underachievers, how to identify high risk students, etc.
- PD related to implementation of preventive programming.

In general, there was a consensus among the professional groups regarding professional development needs. Consistent with LST's emphasis on the needs of individual students, was a request for professional development on intervention

strategies for various types of problems. A second need was professional development for teachers, which was specifically requested by the teachers themselves and the psychoeducational consultants. Respondents were especially requesting that teachers receive professional development on such topics as team functions and goals, identification of problems and appropriate referrals to team.

Team process - that is, strategies for improving team communication, cohesion and organization - was the next most frequent request. This request was made by 45% of the social workers, but by only 10% of classroom teachers and 13% of special education teachers. It is understandable that social workers, whose training emphasizes system theory, and work with families and groups, would be the most sensitive to group process issues.

Information about children and their needs - that is, child development issues, specific learning needs - was the next most frequently mentioned request and one that was quite uniform across professional groups.

Professional development regarding preventive programming was the least frequently made request. Social workers and psychoeducational consultants were a little more likely to mention the topic than principals, special education and classroom teachers. Data throughout this study have indicated that respondents placed much more importance on meeting the needs of individual students and a lesser emphasis on identifying needs that are common to a number of students and using this information as a basis for planning prevention programs.

Chapter 4

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Overall Findings

The discussion so far has pointed to many areas in which school teams are working effectively, as well as some avenues for development. First, overall satisfaction with the school teams is high and they are perceived as addressing students' needs. The majority of teams seem to meet frequently and to have developed administrative procedures which participants believe effectively deal with the problems of referred students. Most teams, especially in the elementary panel, benefit from the active involvement of the school administration. It appears that for many teams, goals and responsibilities are agreed upon by all concerned and that effective group processes for decision making and following through on responsibilities have been established. There seems to be a consensus among team members regarding the importance of understanding student needs, of planning appropriate interventions, at school, at home, and in the community, and of providing multidisciplinary consultation to school staff.

Athough the majority of our respondents were satisfied with the effectiveness of their team, it is also true that a significant minority of them were dissatisfied. This study suggests that the causes for their dissatisfaction are multiple and interrelated.

4.2 Recommendations

Earlier it was noted that the frequency of team meetings was correlated with members' evaluation of the effectiveness of team processes and with their participation in team decision making. This does not suggest that meeting more frequently will necessarily increase a team's effectiveness. In fact, meeting less frequently may, in some cases, be a symptom of dysfunctional team processes rather than their cause. However, there does appear to be a reciprocal and interactive relationship between the

frequency of team meetings, effective group decision making processes, and agreed upon team goals. Teams that meet more frequently have the opportunity to establish effective processes and build a consensus regarding goals and responsibilities. When this has occurred, teams come to work more effectively and have greater success in meeting the needs of the school community. Both team members and the school staff become more satisfied with the work of the team. Members of teams which meet at least biweekly, and which devote a portion of their time each year to goal setting and team building are likely to perceive a greater degree of success and satisfaction than members of teams which meet less frequently.

There are additional areas which a majority of teams may wish to consider as possibilities for development. First, teams may be emphasizing academic and learning deficits at the expense of learning strengths. Furthermore, team members seem not to be particularly conscious of referred students' social and emotional needs. It is suggested that consideration be given to developing ways of ensuring that the needs of the whole child are evaluated both in determining appropriate team referrals and during team discussions.

A second area for development concerns the priority that teams currently give to prevention programming. The results of this study show that although there was a high degree of consensus regarding the role of the team in understanding and planning for the needs of individual students, there was less consensus regarding the role of prevention programs. Indeed, the results indicate that most teams are successful in planning interventions for individual students, but do not put much emphasis on preventive programming that addresses the needs of an entire class or school. As suggested by the consultation model presented earlier, these teams are relying on only a small number of the many options available for meeting student needs. In many schools, especially those in which the principal provides strong educational leadership, many preventive educational programs are already underway. Such programs are undertaken from the perspective that students' academic difficulties do not arise solely from learning deficits that lie within the child, but may at times be ameliorated or eliminated entirely through changes in the instructional program (Rosenfield, 1987). Thus, thoughtful teachers and school administrators are constantly searching for ways in which instructional programming can be improved.

The involvement of the school team in preventively-oriented instruction and consultation already occurs when teams consider instructional modifications in the

classrooms of referred students. It is suggested that this concept be expanded to give greater priority to classroom and school wide interventions. These efforts should be seen as complementary, rather than as an addition to ongoing curriculum initiatives in the school. Such an approach has the dual advantage of ensuring that school-wide programs reflect individual student needs, as well as providing for a preventive approach that can improve the educational experience for all students and potentially decrease students' need for special class placements (Rosenfield and Reynolds, 1990).

The third area for development concerns the involvement of the teaching staff in the team. While many schools include referring teachers as members of the team, these teachers do not always play an active role in team decision making. While scheduling problems and lack of release time often make classroom teachers' attendance at team meeting difficult, increasing teachers' participation must become a priority if they are to fully realize their responsibility for implementing the teams' recommendations. Teachers are much more likely to implement plans they have helped to formulate than otherwise. Moreover, up to 40% of teams do not have a regular mechanism for communicating with and getting input from the teaching staff regarding team goals and responsibilities. In some schools this seems to have resulted in teachers having a somewhat different view of team goals from that of regular team members.

Even where teams do have more regular communication channels with teachers, communication may be unidirectional from the team to the teaching staff. Most respondents said that team goals and responsibilities were decided upon by team members, with little or no direct input from teaching staff. Yet, if teams are to have a meaningful role in preventive programming within the school, such input is essential. Plans for educational change must take into account the needs of the teaching staff as well as their fundamental educational beliefs (Welch, 1989; Rosenfield and Reynolds, 1990). Such an approach will ensure that the work of the team is seen to be effective, helpful and an integral part of the school program.

The last area for development concerns goal setting and self evaluation. It appears that many teams do take time to make plans and set goals for the coming academic year. However, they do not consistently evaluate whether their goals have been achieved, especially with regard to the satisfaction of team members and the team's ability to meet the needs of the teaching staff. It is suggested that when goals are set, methods for determining whether they have been achieved be identified from the outset; that plans be made for collecting the necessary information; and time lines for

evaluation of objectives be established. Such a process will allow teams to chart their own progress, leading to increased levels of satisfaction for the benefit of all involved.

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Appendix A

School Team Chairperson Questionnaire

SCHOOL TEAM QUESTIONNAIRE

To Be Completed By: The School Team Chairperson

A. Background Information

1. What is your present job title? _____

2. In what kind of school do you work?

Elementary K-6 ___ Senior Elementary 7-8 ___
Elementary K-8 ___ Secondary ___
Alternative School ___

3. For how long have you participated in school team meetings, whether at this school or at other schools? _____

B. Information About Your School Team

1. Composition of your School Team (Please check. Indicate N.A. beside positions that do not exist in your school.)

Membership	Regular Member	Invited Members
Principal		
Vice-Principal(s)		
Classroom Teacher(s)		
Learning Centre Teacher(s) or Special Ed. Head		
Guidance Counsellor(s)		
Psycho-educational Consultant		
Social Worker		
Curriculum Consultant(s)		
Parent(s)		
School Nurse		
Other		

2. a)How often does your School Team meet? _____
b)At what time of day does your Team usually meet? _____
c)How long is a typical meeting? _____

3. a)Estimate the amount of time allocated for discussion on each referred student _____.
b)What proportion of time is spent - describing the student's needs _____%
- planning interventions _____%

4. Check the sources of information that are regularly reviewed by the Team.

___ O.S.R. ___ Psychological Reports
___ Work Samples ___ Social Work Reports
___ Special Education Report ___ Other _____

** Please feel free to use the reverse side or attach additional pages.

.../2

5. What administrative procedures does your Team use? (Please attach a sample of any summary form(s) that the team uses.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. a) Please estimate the number of students that are discussed by your School Team each year (Consider the past 3 years) _____.

b) Please estimate what percent of these would be discussed on more than one occasion _____%.

7. In each Team meeting, estimate the percentage of time allotted for discussion of:

Individual Students ____% Classroom Issues ____% Team Issues ____%

Groups of Students ____% School Issues ____%

8. Please estimate what percentage of students discussed by the Team during one year will be forwarded to:

Local IPRC ____% Area IPRC ____%

9. a) Why are you the School Team Chairperson? _____

_____

_____

b) Do you have the responsibility for scheduling meetings and co-ordinating follow-up?

YES _____ NO _____

c) If not, who does? Why? _____

_____

_____

_____

[R] 10. In your opinion, what special skills does each individual bring to the Team over and above those suggested by their job titles? Do they carry out any special tasks as Team members? Please select 1 or 2 skills and 1 or 2 tasks. Indicate N/A beside those who are not regular or invited Team members.

Members	Skills	Tasks
Principal		
Vice-Principal		
Classroom Teacher(s)		

.../3

Items marked with [R] were included in other sets of questionnaires for the various professional groups.

Members	Skills	Tasks
Learning Centre Teacher Special Education Head.		
Guidance Counsellor		
Psycho-educational Consultant		
Social Worker		
Curriculum Consultant(s)		
Parent(s)		
School Nurse		
Other(s)		

[R] 11.Please estimate how often individual students who have been referred to the Team have the following characteristics. Please circle one number from 1 to 5.

	Seldom				Very Often
Oral language is at or above level	1	2	3	4	5
Reading is at or above level	1	2	3	4	5
Spelling is at or above level	1	2	3	4	5
Written language is at or above level	1	2	3	4	5
Math is at or above level	1	2	3	4	5
Handwriting/printing is at or above level	1	2	3	4	5
General knowledge is at or above level	1	2	3	4	5
Requires advanced/enriched programming	1	2	3	4	5
Catches on to new ideas quickly	1	2	3	4	5
Is creative/has many interests	1	2	3	4	5
Needs extra explanations to understand new ideas	1	2	3	4	5
Is likely to forget instructions or routines	1	2	3	4	5
Can work in a co-operative group.	1	2	3	4	5
Manages time appropriately	1	2	3	4	5
Work is adequately organized, tidy	1	2	3	4	5
Is task committed	1	2	3	4	5
Works at tasks only when watched or compelled	1	2	3	4	5
Easily distracted	1	2	3	4	5
On the whole, attends well	1	2	3	4	5
Works too quickly, makes careless mistakes	1	2	3	4	5
Works steadily, but too slowly to finish in time allowed	1	2	3	4	5
Daily work is adequate, but has difficulty with tests or quizzes	1	2	3	4	5

.../4

	Seldom |	Very Often |
Is motivated to learn	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4	5
Completes homework/projects	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4	5
Prepares for quizzes, tests, exams	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4	5
Participates actively in class	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4	5
Seeks help appropriately	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4	5
Likes academic challenges	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4	5
Enjoys extra-curricular activities and/or sports	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4	5
Obeys school rules	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4	5
Appreciates attention from teachers	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4	5
Appropriate social skills with teachers and peers	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4	5
Is frequently in arguments/fights	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4	5
Acts impulsively	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4	5
Quiet, withdrawn	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4	5
Behaves immaturely	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4	5
Shows inappropriate sexual behaviour	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4	5
Has high self-esteem; positive self concept	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4	5
Shows frequent mood swings	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4	5
Is unhappy, depressed	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4	5
Has nervous habits	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4	5
Has phobias	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4	5
Is worried, anxious	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4	5
Can tolerate frustration	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4	5
Attendance Issues	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4	5
Substance Abuse	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4	5
Child Abuse	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4	5
Medical Needs	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4	5
Family Stressors	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4	5
E.S.L. Needs	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4	5

.../5

	Seldom	Very Often
Other _____	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4 5	
_____	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4 5	
_____	1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4 5	

[R] 12. In general, what kinds of contributions by Team members do you find helpful? Why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

C. Your Experience with the Team

[R] Please rate each of the following based on your experience with School Teams by circling a number from 1 to 5.

		Not at all	Very Often
1.	I am satisfied with my participation on the Team.	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5	
2.	I am satisfied with the effectiveness of the Team process.	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5	
3.	I participate in decision making.	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5	
4.	I am pleased with resulting Team recommendations.	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5	
5.	Our Team developed a systematic approach to collecting and analyzing information.	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5	
6.	All Team members are actively encouraged to have input before decisions are made.	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5	
7.	Follow-up activities are jointly determined by Team members.	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5	
8.	Follow-up plans are implemented.	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5	
9.	Working with other professional disciplines helped in my skill development.	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5	
10.	During meetings I provide suggestions for curriculum modifications.	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5	

.../6

		Not at all				Very Often
11.	During meetings I provide suggestions for behavioural management strategies.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	During Team meetings I provide recommendations for community services.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	I provide follow-up consultation to teachers.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	School staff feel positive about a problem solving team approach.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	The Local School Team has provided an avenue for preventive services.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	The Local School Team evaluates its effectiveness in terms of meeting students needs.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	The Local School Team evaluates its effectiveness in terms of meeting teacher needs.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	The Local School Team evaluates effectiveness in terms of participant satisfaction.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	The Local School Team benefits the students in my school.	1	2	3	4	5

[R]

D. School Team Goals

1. Please rate the following School Team goals in terms of the personal importance you attribute to each. (Use a number from 1 to 5.)

		Not Important				Very Important
a.	To facilitate referrals for specialized services: (Educational, Psychological, Social Work.)	1	2	3	4	5
b.	To coordinate the work of team members.	1	2	3	4	5
c.	To monitor referrals for Special Education placement.	1	2	3	4	5
d.	To understand individual student needs and plan appropriate interventions, in school, in the community, at home.	1	2	3	4	5
e.	To provide multidisciplinary consultation to school personnel regarding the needs of individual students.	1	2	3	4	5
f.	To coordinate specialized group work or other programs for students "at risk".	1	2	3	4	5
g.	To help identify common student needs and assist in planning schoolwide preventative programs and procedures.	1	2	3	4	5

.../7

2)a. How are School Team goals, responsibilities and organization decided upon? _____

[R] _____

b. How is this information conveyed to the teaching staff? _____

[R] _____

3)a. To what extent, does your School Team accomplish its goals? _____

[R] _____

b. What does it do well? (Please give one specific example) _____

[R] _____

c. What could it do better? _____

[R] _____

.../8

d. What issues/topics related to the functioning of School Teams would you like future professional development sessions to address? _____

[R]

_____

_____

_____

_____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

PLEASE PLACE QUESTIONNAIRE IN ENVELOPE PROVIDED; SEAL; AND RETURN TO PRINCIPAL BY FEBRUARY 19.

01/90

Appendix B

School Team Sample Forms

[redacted] PUBLIC SCHOOL TEAM

Teacher referral Date _____

Student's Name _____ Date of Birth _____ Grade ____

Teacher _____ Room _____

Concerns _____

School Team Discussion Date _____

School Team Recommendations

	Responsibility of	Target date
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

LOCAL SCHOOL TEAM CONFIDENTIAL REPORT

PLEASE PRINT _____ DATE _____

SURNAME: _____ FIRST: _____

STUDENT # _____ GROUP: _____ DATE OF BIRTH _____

REFERRED BY: _____ SUBJECT _____

REASONS FOR CONCERN(S):

PRESENT MARK ____ PER/DAYS ABSENT ____ NO OF LATES ____

_____

_____

_____

_____

INDICATE ACTIONS TAKEN TO HELP STUDENT TO IMPROVE:

A) INDIVIDUAL IN CLASS INSTRUCTION ____
B) EXTRA HELP IN/OUTSIDE OF CLASS ____
C) EXTRA TIME ____
D) STUDENT INTERVIEW ____
E) PARENTAL CONTACT ____
F) REFERRAL (S) TO:
   HEAD OF DEPARTMENT ____
   GUIDANCE ____
   SOCIAL WORKER ____

PROVIDE DETAILS: _____

_____

INDICATE ACTION YOU WOULD RECOMMEND: _____

_____

TO BE COMPLETED BY GUIDANCE COUNSELLOR O.S.R. INFORMATION

_____

_____

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: _____

_____

Tracking for Student Services

Name Number							
1. Referred to Local School Team							
2. Parent meeting							
3. Permission for assessment sent							
4. Referral form to psy/soc services							
5. Permission for assessment returned							
6. Projected date of assessment							
7. Assessment completed							
8. Assessment shared with parent							
9. Recommendation							
10. Application for I.P.R.C. to Sp. Ed. Dept. -Teacher's report -Psy. Assessment -Outside agency							
11. Acknowledgment of application from Sp. Ed. Dept. (ie. receipt)							
12. I.P.R.C. date set							
13. Invitation to Parents							
14. I.P.R.C. meeting date/location							
15. Decision							
16. Placement							
17. Parent placement approval							

STUDENT APPRAISAL FORM - LOCAL SCHOOL TEAM

This form is meant to survey your impressions of the student named below, and should be treated as confidential information. It should not be discussed with him/her.

TEACHER _____ SUBJECT _____

STUDENT _____ HOME FORM _____

Given Name(s) Surname

PLEASE RETURN TO _____ BEFORE _____ 19____

****

I. FOR EACH ITEM PLEASE CHECK THE COLUMN WHICH YOU FEEL APPLIES TO THE ABOVE STUDENT:

	YES	NO	N/A
ORGANIZATION SKILLS			
a. Comes to class on time			
b. Completes assignment on time			
c. Completes homework regularly			
d. Keeps well organized/complete notebooks			
e. Comes equipped for class			
BEHAVIOUR			
a. Attends regularly			
b. Demonstrates a consistent attitude			
c. Has no trouble sitting still			
d. Is attentive			
e. Co-operates in class			
f. Participates in class discussions			
g. Asks questions and volunteers answers			
RECEPTIVE SKILLS			
a. Follows directions easily			
b. Remembers material presented orally			
c. Remembers material presented visually			
d. Appears to grasp the abstract ideas presented			
e. Demonstrates good reading comprehension			
f. Completes reading assignments on time			
EXPRESSIVE SKILLS			
a. Expresses ideas well orally			
b. Expresses ideas well in written form			
c. Completes tests or assignments on time			
d. Writes well cursively ..			
e. Tends to print			
f. Spells satisfactorily			

II. PRESENT STANDING IN CLASS: Over 60 Passing Failing

III. RECENT TREND OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT: Improving No Change Slippir

IV. INDICATE ACTIONS TAKEN TO HELP STUDENT TO IMPROVE:

a. Individual instruction [ ] b. Extra help outside of class [ ] c. Extra time [ ]

d. Student Interview [ ] e. Individualized Material [ ] f. Referral(s) [ ]

PLEASE TURN OVER

LOCAL SCHOOL TEAM PLAN

STUDENT _____ STUDENT NO. _____ D.O.B. _____

Surname Given Name(s) Day/Mo./Year

DATE	RECOMMENDATIONS	FOLLOW THROUGH